

Message Text

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54-S

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CPR-02 EB-11 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 NEA-10

NIC-01 DRC-01 /162 W

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P R 071114Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7201

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 4503

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, RO

SUBJ: CEAUSESCU VISIT: EARLY RETURN

REF: BUCHAREST 4473 (NOTAL)

1. ROMANIAN OFFICIALS IN BUCHAREST HAVE REMAINED CLOSE-MOURED ON REASONS FOR CURTAILMENT OF CEAUSESCU VISIT TO US AFTER PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT.

2. ACTING FONMIN GLIGA, AS RELAXED AND SELF-ASSURED AS EVER, TOLD CHARGE EVENING DECEMBER 6 THAT NO REPEAT NO "SPECIFIC, OFFICIAL REASON" LAY BEHIND CEAUSESCU'S DECISION TO LEAVE US EARLY OTHER THAN FACT THAT LONG TRIP IN US TO SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST OVER WEEKEND, IMMEDIATELY PROCEEDING "HEAVY WORK WEEK AT HOME", WOULD BE VERY TIRING FOR
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PRESIDENT AND HIS PARTY. GLIGA CONTINUES EXPECT ETA

BUCHAREST SATURDAY DECEMBER 8 AT ABOUT 1000 HOURS (WHICH PROBABLY INDICATES NO STOPOVER ON RETURN FLIGHT OTHER THAN FOR REFUELING OR SHORT AIRPORT STOP). USA DESK OFFICER DITULESCU TOOK SAME LINE MORNING OF DECEMBER 7 AND ALSO REFERRED TO CEAUSESCU'S RESPONSE TO PRESS CLUB QUERY DECEMBER 5 ABOUT SHORTENED VISIT.

3. BOTH GLIGA AND DITULESCU APPEARED VERY PLEASED WITH RESULTS OF US VISIT. THEY EMPHASIZED SIGNING OF JOINT STATEMENTS AND APPROVAL OF GUIDELINES ON ECONOMIC, INDUSTRIAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION AS HIGHLIGHTS OF VISIT. GLIGA WAS OVERHEARD DESCRIBING VISIT IN ENTHUSIASTIC TERMS TO MEMBERS OF DIPLOMATIC CORP AT RECEPTION EVENING DECEMBER 6.

4. AT LATTER EVENT, SOVIET AMBASSADOR DISPLAYED AS MUCH OR MORE CURIOSITY ABOUT CURTAILMENT AS ANYONE, GRABBING CHARGE BY ARM AND TAKING HIM ASIDE TO PUMP FOR INFORMATION. WHEN CHARGE RESPONDED THAT PERHAPS SOVIETS KNEW MORE THAN OTHERS ABOUT CEAUSESCU'S DECISION, SOVAMB JOKED THAT "IF CEAUSESCU WAS LEAVING THE USSR EARLY, YOU CAN BET I WOULD KNOW WHY."

5. COMMENT: NO ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE HAS COME TO LIGHT IN MANY RECENT CONTACTS EMBASSY HAS HAD WITH ROMANIAN OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF DIPCORPS WHICH WOULD SUPPORT THEORY OTHER THAN THAT SUGGESTED EARLIER (REFTEL) -- THAT CEAUSESCU'S RETURN RELATED TO MIDDLE EAST QUESTIONS. SOME URGENT MATTER IN CONNECTION WITH USSR IS ALWAYS POSSIBILITY, BUT WHILE NUANCES IN CEAUSESCU'S PLENUM SPEECH AND SCINTEIA EDITORIAL DECEMBER 4 MAY REFLECT PRIVATE SOVIET CRITICISM OF RECENT GOR FOREIGN POLICY ACTIONS (NOTABLY ME INITIATIVES INCLUDING EBAN VISIT, AND ABORTED VISIT TO ATHENS), COMPORTMENT OF SOVIET DIPLOMATS HERE STRONGLY SUGGESTS THEY ARE AS IGNORANT AS OTHERS CONCERN- IN CEAUSESCU'S RETURN. OTHER POSSIBILITY REMAINS THAT CEAUSESCU MAY BE RETURNING TO MEET OR PREPARE FOR MEETING IN BUCHAREST WITH OTHER FOREIGN VISITOR, BUT EVEN RUMORS LACKING SO FAR.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BUCHAR04503
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BUCHAREST
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731239/aaaabciz.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BUCHAREST 4473 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02-Aug-2001 by willialc>; APPROVED <15-Nov-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CEAUSESCU VISIT: EARLY RETURN
TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, RO, (CEAUSESCU)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005